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ABSTRACT

Three aspects of instruction in English for Special Purposes (ESP) in the workplace are discussed with emphasis on the partnership between the ESL teacher, the employer and supervisors, and the worker with a limited knowledge of English. First, a plan for defining needs is outlined, which involves discussion of numbers and types of students, ways to group them, scheduling, location of the course, financing, and materials. The needs analysis also involves: (1) observing the work-site; (2) conversing with workers, noting language functions, various methods of assessing English language levels, and reading and writing skills; and (3) establishing a profile of ways in which English serves the learner/worker on the job. The second area discussed is program design, that is, a step-by-step process for setting up the program, defining the objectives and working out activities and approaches to evaluation. The final section outlines the steps taken to develop one successful ESP course and describes methods and materials in the course as it progressed. (AMH)

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Refugee Education Guide
Adult Education Series #14

Partnerships
The ESP Teacher
Private Industry
Plans for Action
Definition of Needs
Practical Organization
Preparation
Observation
Interaction
Interviews
Principles
Tolerance of Errors
Spiral Approach
Objectives
Evaluation

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ESL in the Workplace

English for Specific Purposes in the Work Setting

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REFUGEE EDUCATION GUIDE

Adult Education Series #14

ESL in the Workplace

English for Specific Purposes in the Work Setting

This Guide looks at the nature of the partnership between the instructor of English for Specific Purposes, private industry, and the working refugee with a limited knowledge of English. We will discuss how an instructor goes about designing a course which responds to the expectations and requirements of industry and the needs of the learner/worker.

Our appreciation and thanks are extended to Brenda Bowman for her contributions and assistance in the writing of this Guide. We also wish to thank Lynn Savage, Autumn Keltner, David Prince, Julia Gage, Laura Gould, and Ellen Karel for their assistance and helpful suggestions.

I. Introduction

For a number of reasons, the refugee's workplace provides an advantageous environment for teaching English language courses. It sets up opportunities to provide functional, clearly-focused language instruction which can benefit the employer as well as the employee, and it enables the ESL teacher to have access to all the necessary equipment and materials to present a relevant, job-related English program.

In this Guide, we want to look at the role which the employer can play in facilitating English language instruction for limited-English speaking employees. However, since programs of this nature are not widely known in the business community, it becomes the responsiblity of the ESL instructor to suggest this alternative and to work with employers and supervisors in developing specialized ESL programs in the workplace. Our more specific purpose, then, becomes one of examining the nature of the partnership between the ESL teacher, private industry, and the worker with a limited knowledge of English. In later sections, we will discuss how a teacher prepares a course which responds to the expectations and requirements of industry and the needs of the learner/worker.

II. The Partnership: ESP and the Employer

Over the past decade, English language programs have become increasingly specialized.[1] One of these areas of specialization, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), has its roots in vocational ESL, the teaching of linguistic skills in the context of a job. What is new about ESP is that it looks at the learner and the purposes for which the target language is required. It is on this assessment of purposes and needs that the entire ESP program is built.

ESP is part of a larger movement within the language teaching profession away from a concentration on structures to an emphasis on language in context or use. In emphasizing functional language, a variety of programs have been developed which move the English language program away from the classroom and into the work site. These ESP courses may be offered as individual programs, on an as-needed basis, or as part of a larger vocational training program.

It is possible to develop an integrated program which teaches job skills and the language skills one needs to function on that job.

While the advantages of an ESP program may seem apparent to an ESL instructor, they will need to be presented clearly to employers, to businesses and industry. Industry may be reluctant to engage in a project which seems vague, inappropriate or beyond the company's normal range of training.

The proposal of the ESL program, therefore, must:

- describe precisely the concrete objectives which would be achieved in an ESP course.
- show that the course is specific to the company's needs.
- illustrate that this kind of language training can be offered concurrently with other employee training.
- explain how ESP is a valuable training course in that it not only enables employees to expand their skills, but also enhances their productivity.

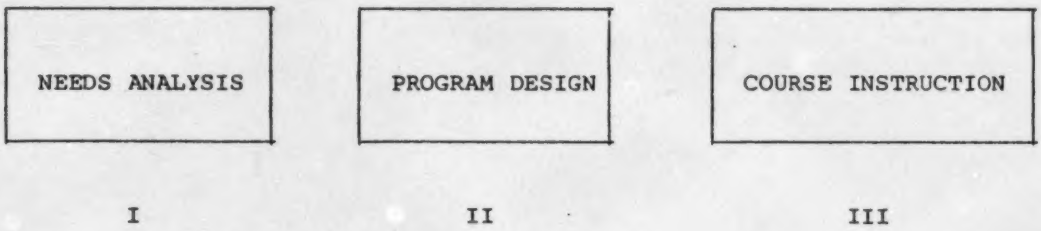
Very broadly, employers offer two types of response to suggestions that ESP courses should be taught to their employees. The first response is a denial of any need for ESP courses. Either the employer believes that English is not necessary for the job ("You don't need English to make beds") or believes that, if English is necessary, other employees can be found who already speak English.

The second type of response indicates an interest in offering ESP courses. These employers view ESP courses as opening employment opportunities for workers who are good employees (that is, reliable and careful in their jobs) and providing opportunities for employees to continue learning on their job and thus becoming more flexible and promotable employees.

While it will be difficult to sell ESL courses to employers who maintain the first attitude, these attitudes can be changed by stressing the positive economic benefits of English language instruction. Hopefully, the second attitude will be more common. The ESP teacher will find that many businesses have had their own training departments for years and are accustomed to thinking in these terms. In addition, their experience outside the U.S. will have brought them into contact with training programs in other countries. Some large companies have financed English language training centers overseas as part of their pursuit of sales and markets. Such companies, well aware of the link between communication and productivity, call on the ESP expert when faced with problems arising from the employment of limited-English speaking workers. Companies operating solely within the United States may also be concerned enough with similar problems to contact teachers for help.

It is important to note that ESP programs can be designed to be cost-conscious and cost-effective; moreover, they can be specific to the needs of the employer. To do so requires three major steps, as Figure 1 reveals.

Figure 1



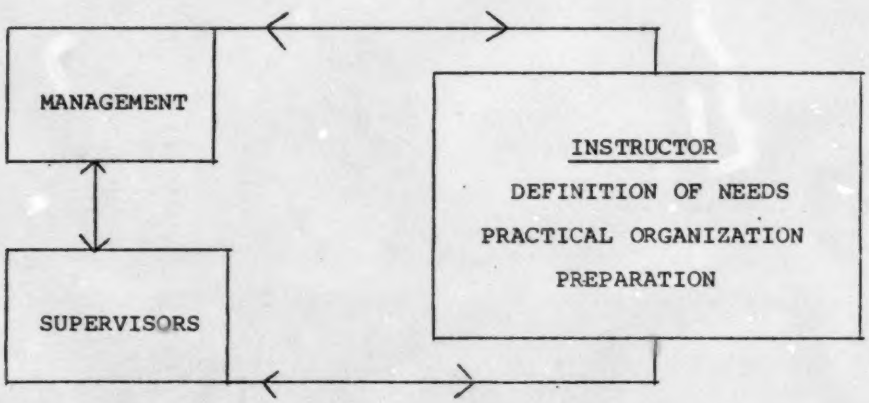
Step III will be most effective if Steps I and II are a collaborative effort between the employers and the ESL instructors.

A Plan of Action

The initial contacts must be at the managerial level. The teacher will want to talk with someone who can evaluate proposals and make decisions. It is important, though, that the discussions should broaden immediately beyond the manager's office, to include someone, such as a foreman, who is in close contact with the workers whose limited English is causing concern.

Figure 2 shows the steps of this initial contact:

Figure 2



Definition of Needs

Both management and supervisors will need to be consulted early in defining needs, since their involvement is essential to the success of an ESP course in the workplace. Not only will they offer insight into course design, but by being consulted, they will also have an investment in the success of the program. In addition, the consultation process will avoid the risk of the company's finding itself paying for courses which are inappropriate and unresponsive to their needs--a general English course with job-specific jargon simply tacked on, for instance. This kind of realization could seriously threaten the entire partnership relation.

In the discussion with management, the following points should be clarified before a course is designed:

1. How many people will be in the program?
   This will depend on the number needing English classes and the amount of money available for the program.
2. What criteria will be used to identify workers eligible for ESP?
3. How many learners should be in each group?
   Although class size can vary, classes larger than 15-20 would be difficult to teach since ESP courses involve considerable amounts of demonstration.
4. How will learners be assigned to groups?
   The groups will be as homogenous as possible in their command of English, although some multilevel classes may be necessary.
5. Is it possible to group students?
   Can work schedules and shifts be accommodated?
   Can department-specific courses be offered? (If a worker is in the receiving and shipping department, it may not be useful to study English used for assembly-line tasks.)
6. How long should the course last?
   It is possible to design a successful course which meets as few as 40-50 hours; these can be spread over 10 to 12 weeks.
7. How should instruction be scheduled?
   Is it possible to offer one-hour sessions, four days a week, or two-hour sessions, twice a week. If the latter is adopted, it should be recognized that these learners are also workers, and that the effectiveness of two hours' study, on top of a full day's work, may be limited.

8. Will the classes meet during work hours?

   The company might offer to provide all the time or ask the workers to contribute some of the time without pay.

9. When should the classes take place?

   This may depend on worker schedules. If they work in shifts, the class could meet during the last hour of one shift and the first hour of the next. If there are no shifts, the classes could take place before work, in the evening after work, or during the lunch hour.

10. Where should the classes be held?

    The work site is ideal because:

    - no time or money is lost transporting workers to class
    - attendance at classes is good, since the location is convenient, and the worker's presence is visible to all
    - distraction and noise are part of the worker's daily reality, and this can be easily integrated into the ESP course
    - the machinery and other materials necessary for demonstration are available

11. What policy should be taken towards absences?

    Learners persistently absent should be dropped from ESP courses.

12. Who should pay for the course?

    In some places, state funds are available for this kind of course, but they come with the disadvantages of considerable paperwork and constraining regulations.
    In most places, the company pays from its own funds, and purchases a program which is well-prepared and specific to its needs and which can be used again and again.

13. Who should pay for materials?

    If possible, the company should pay for the development of materials specific to its needs.

Besides interviews with management and supervisors, a good needs analysis also involves observations of the work site and consultation with co-workers. T. C. Jupp and S. Hodlin note in preparing ESP courses for Asian workers in Britain:

> "It is essential for the teacher to investigate and experience the social reality of a place of work before he can make choices about what language functions a learner in that situation needs, and what linguistic skills these involve. The investigator's role is not

one of detached observer. He must develop a real "feel" for the workplace so that he can understand the experiences, tensions, and frustrations which affect communication there."[2]

A previous figure outlined the first steps in analyzing the communicative needs and in setting up an ESP program. Figure 3, below, shows the second step in this process:

Figure 3

By observing the workplace, the ESL instructors can discover the general nature of the work process and draw the specific language and job tasks of participants in the ESP program. Some instructors may even take jobs in the factories they intend to teach in. A small factory, producing display materials, with workbenches contained in one large area, and employing a total of 40 workers, will not require long hours of observation. But a large brewery or electronics factory is another matter.

During observation, the instructor needs to look at what people read and write on the job, as well as what they say and must understand. Because maintaining intense levels of alertness to communication is demanding, it will help to classify these areas of communication and to note these columns. These columns might also list the language functions anticipated for each skill area. For example:

Language used in routine social interaction:

greetings, farewells, ways of addressing co-workers, talking with co-workers in the cafeteria, working as a part of a team

Language used for a specific job:

responding to instructions, making requests, helping others, keeping records, following safety regulations

Language for flexibility and increased responsibility:

describing the process of the whole plant, addressing a variety of people, giving messages, carrying messages, writing notes, using the telephone, initiating conversation

Language for inquiring about formal procedures:

questioning about wages, holidays, leave, fringe benefits, using the clinic and credit union, discussing grievances

A tape recorder will help provide representative samples of the language used in the workplace, as well as examples of the routine noise levels. If a foreman is recorded describing a job process or giving instructions, this sample can be used in the course. Using this input will reinforce the manager's and co-workers' involvement in the ESP course. In the workplace, the instructor will not have the time to absorb all that is being said, but transcribing parts of the recordings will sharpen awareness of the language being used.

In observing the workplace, it will be important to talk with co-workers. Obviously, this will need to be handled sensitively. A good approach is also to seek out workers in informal settings, such as a coffee break. Instead of inquiring directly about relations with non-American workers, a better strategy is to ask the worker about his or her job--what's difficult about it? what's good about it? In this way the instructor will learn about the work process, and, indirectly, what workers expect of one another.

These conversations can also provide information about:

- the expectations which an English-speaking worker has of co-workers. (A limited-English speaking worker may use the simple strategy of remaining silent. This silence may not be acceptable.) Co-workers expect greetings and comments on the weather or baseball results. They expect gossip and reactions to union activities. Teasing, expressed both physically and verbally, may also be common. The silence of the limited-English speaker may be interpreted as unfriendliness or stupidity, and the atmosphere will cool accordingly.

- the attitudes expressed towards the limited-English speaking worker. Negative attitudes between English speakers and workers with limited English may revolve around personal habits, food, money, using language other than English, work habits, and male-female relations.

- an informal assessment of English proficiency and problems faced by non-native speakers of English on the job. Insights from these informal exchanges with co-workers will provide valuable course content.

Assessment of English Language Levels

Although it is possible to test learners in order to place them in the program, structured interviews might be more appropriate and informative. Tests have the advantage of providing a standardized measurement of progress, but most standardized and validated tests measure a formal knowledge of language structures, rather than the communicative abilities of the learner/worker in the workplace. Moreover, the construction of even a simple test, which has to be standardized and validated, takes a lot of time and experience. Besides, candidates for ESP courses are not usually from sophisticated educational backgrounds, and they may feel intimidated by or resentful of testing procedures. They may also suffer some anxiety that their scores on an English test will be used as a basis for firing them.

Thus, interviews offer a better approach and provide more information upon which the course can be designed and evaluated in terms of learner success. (The bottom line must be the worker's improved ability to communicate on the job after the course.) Structured interviews offer a workable solution to the problem of how to assess the learner/worker's knowledge of English. When possible, the interview should be held in a relaxed setting and include information on the following:

- Social contact
- Job specifics
- Literacy

The following example is for the elementary level. Other, similar tests would have to be devised for higher levels:

Social Contact

Instructor	Learner/Worker's Replies	
	Acceptable	Unacceptable
1. Opening greetings	1	0
2. Self-identification:		
What's your name?	1	0
3. How do you spell your name?	1	0
4. Where do you live?	1	0
5. Which country are you from?	1	0
6. Do you have family here?	0	1
7. How long have you worked here?	1	0
8. Where did you work before?	1	0
9. What's the name of your supervisor?	0	1
10. How do you spell that name?	0	1
TOTAL SCORE:	7	3

Job Specific

A similar outline can be made for the instructor to question the worker on his or her job. The questions can be as follows:

1. What's your job?
2. What do you do in your job?
   On an assembly line, for instance?
3. What happens to the product before it reaches you?
4. What do you do to it?
5. What happens to the product after it leaves you?
6. What time do you start work?
7. What's the first thing you do when you get to your work station?
8. Do you get more work done in the morning or in the afternoon?
9. What problems do you have in this job?
10. Who do you go to if you need help?

Literacy

A rough assessment of reading and writing skills can be obtained by giving the worker a form to fill out--name, date of birth, country of origin, occupation, place of work, etc. Or the worker could be asked to complete small tasks, such as the ones which follow:[3]

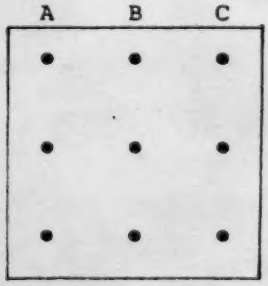
Directions: Circle the number that is the same as the first number:

1.	A10109	A11009	A10109	A01019	A01010
2.	06B7845-0978	06B745-0978	06B7844-0987	0B67845-097B	06B7845-0978
3.	6XR12	6XR13	6X6R12	6XR12	6XRR12
4.	D8A0774661	D80774616	D8A0746611	DDA0774661	D8A0774661
5.	S44T533X-01	S44T35X-01	S44T533X-01	544T53X-01	S4T43551-0X

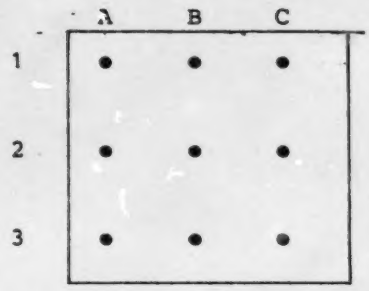
Directions: Draw a picture to match the directions.

Example:

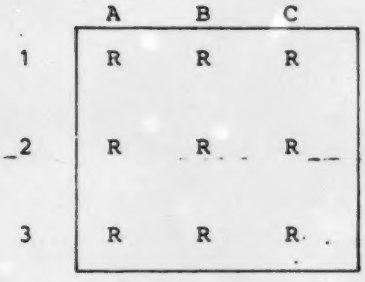
1. Add a jumper from A1 to B3.



2. Add jumpers from A1 to B1
   B1 to C1
   C2 to B3
   A3 to B2
   C3 to B1



3. Remove R at B2, C1.



During this testing, it may become apparent that some of the learner/workers have difficulty in coping with literacy. If this is so, the groups should be divided into those with strong literacy skills and those without. This should be done regardless of the levels of English. (The guide ESL in the Multilevel Class, already referred to, advises on how to deal with this problem.)

It will be helpful if the instructor can keep records of these interviews, as this will cut down on paper work, and the recordings made before a course can be compared with recordings made on completion of the course.

All of this seems like it will take a lot of time. How much time should be spent on preparation? This depends on:

- the amount of money available for preparation
- the amount of experience in organizing ESP courses
- the size of the project
- the complexity of the work itself

Obviously, the amount of preparation time decreases as the instructor gains experience in assessing needs, analyzing systems and procedures in the work-place, and selecting appropriate materials.

An experienced ESP instructor, who sets up an ESP program for an electron-

ics company, calculated spending about 30 hours of preparation time as follows:

Interaction with managers, supervisors, and co-workers:	4 hours
Interaction with limited-English speaking employees:	4 hours
Observation in the workplace:	8 hours
(It should be noted that security procedures in the plant curtailed these three activities.)	
Analysis of interaction and observation:	4 hours
Testing and grouping of learner/workers:	3 hours
(This did not include the writing of a special diagnostic test.)	
Program outline, plus lesson outline for the first five lessons:	8 hours
Total Preparation Time:	31 hours

Assessment of Communicative Needs

The instructor should conduct a formal interview with at least one learner per job. If the learner/worker does not have sufficient English to answer the questions, it may be possible to turn to another worker, who can interpret, or to call upon a local ethnic self-help group for an interpreter. If these options don't exist, the instructor will have to ask to work supervisor to answer some of these questions.

The aim of the interview is to establish a profile of the ways in which English does--or does not--serve the learner/worker in the workplace and to target the needs he or she has to communicate in English.

The questions in this interview are adapted from John Munby's Communicative Needs Processor,[4] which is part of an ambitious project for defining the content of a specific purpose language program. A full execution of the type of investigation advocated by Munby is impractical for most ESP instructors, but the present exercise is extremely useful for directing attention towards the learner/worker and for sensitizing the instructor to areas of language use which may otherwise have gone unnoticed. For instance, in the section on channels of communication, the instructor may learn that the P.A. system is an important channel of communication and, so, needs some treatment in the course.

The interview covers 8 areas:

1. Personal
   - Language background
   - Cultural background
2. Purpose
   - Occupation for which English is needed
3. Setting
   - Physical and psychosocial setting in which English is used
4. Interaction
   - Role relationships
5. Instrumentality
   - Speaking and writing, receptive and productive
   - Face-to-face, telephone
6. Target level
   - Level of competence required in English
7. Communicative events
   - What the learner/worker has to be able to do in English
8. Attitudes
   - Attitudinal tones the learner/worker is required to master

We have conducted an interview to cover these areas and have included the answers here. (See pp. 22-25.) This questionnaire is extensive, and instructors need not be overly concerned if they cannot obtain answers to all the questions; in fact, some information may have to be learned by observation in the workplace or by asking co-workers. (Remember that in some cases people will say what they think you want to hear. It takes time to develop a relaxed atmosphere which encourages candid answers.)

Program Design

Few materials exist for ESP courses, and in most cases teachers will be obliged to adapt or write materials themselves. Indeed, if a course is being presented specifically for a company, management will expect to see materials created to reply to their special needs.

There are some disadvantages for a teacher writing an ESP course:

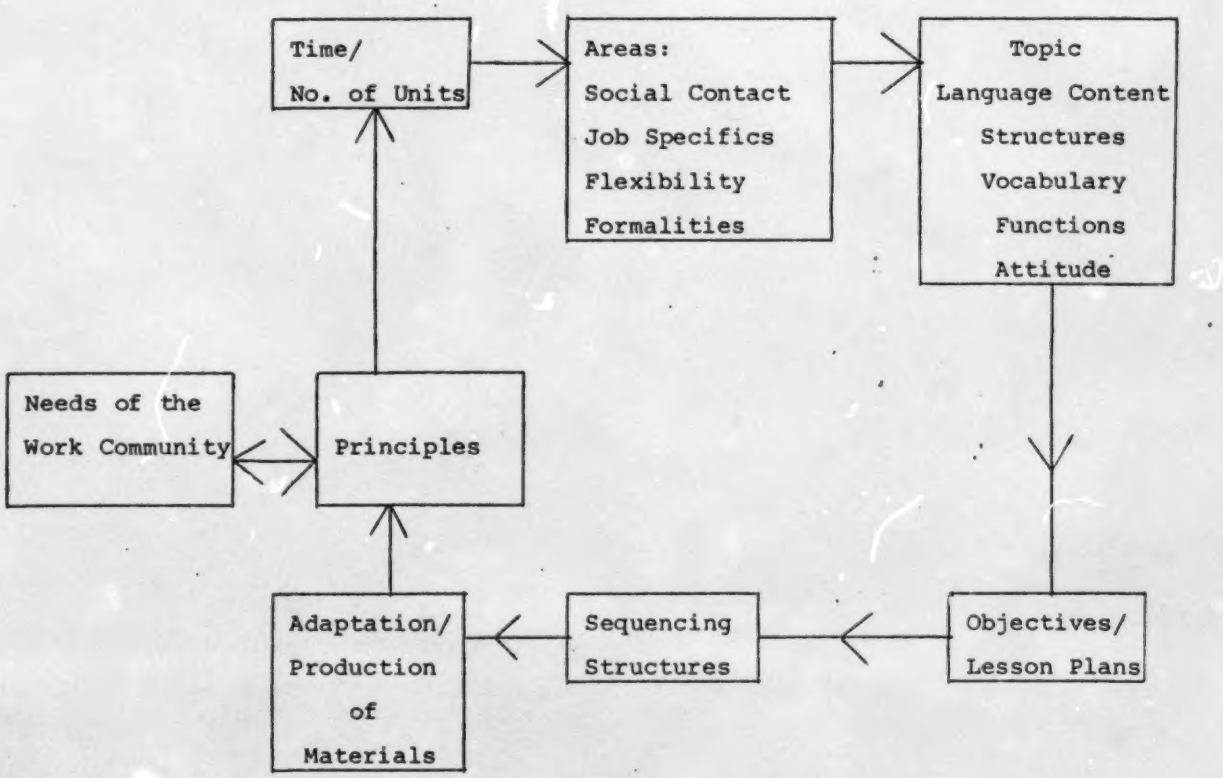
o A great deal of time is required to develop a program. When we suggested that a teacher needed 30 hours of preparation for an ESP course, we were not supposing that this would allow time for the writing of the whole course.

o Teachers may feel intimidated by the prospect of writing a curriculum and the individual lessons for an ESP course. A good way to overcome this hesitancy is to work towards precise, limited goals and to teach towards a few defined objectives.

If a 50-hour course is planned, the instructor might select 50 lesson objectives and then adapt or write material for these. They should be shown to members of the work community to verify that the objectives are appropriate and the expectations of the community are being met.

Figure 4 illustrates a step-by-step process for selecting the lesson objectives which make up the ESP course.

Figure 4



The steps are explained as follows:

1. Divide hours into units. For example, if the course is to take 40 hours:

5 units of 8 hours each = 7 lessons of one hour each

1 consolidation lesson

For a 40 hour course, 35 lesson objectives are needed, with 5 hours left for consolidation.

2. Revise the notes taken during interviews and in observations of the workplace. Classify these notes into 4 areas:

- Routine social interaction
- Job specifics
- Language for flexibility and increased responsibility
- Language for inquiring about formal procedures

Then build charts for the four areas, allowing approximately ten functions for each area. (See page 26.)

The language content should come directly from the instructor's observation notes and recordings, though instructors may may wish to consult ESL textbooks, with a functional approach, for further examples.

The instructor should also know which formula the limited-English speaking worker will need to actively use, and which ones should simply be understood. Obviously, relevant vocabulary and English structures will need to be built into these lessons.

3. Input for attitude should also come from notes and recordings made during observation of the workplace. ESP classes should recognize the importance of this point and should offer learner/workers insight into why this occurs and how to prevent or lessen the friction.

4. In order to organize the lessons, the instructor should look at ESL textbooks. For instance, the series In Touch[5] has a functional approach, plus an analysis of grammar and sequencing of structures. At the end of each lesson is a summary of the grammar studied. By studying the patterns of sequence, the ESP teacher can see which features are suitable for the first stages of an elementary level, the second stages of this level, etc., and can select and sequence lesson objectives from the chart following similar patterns.

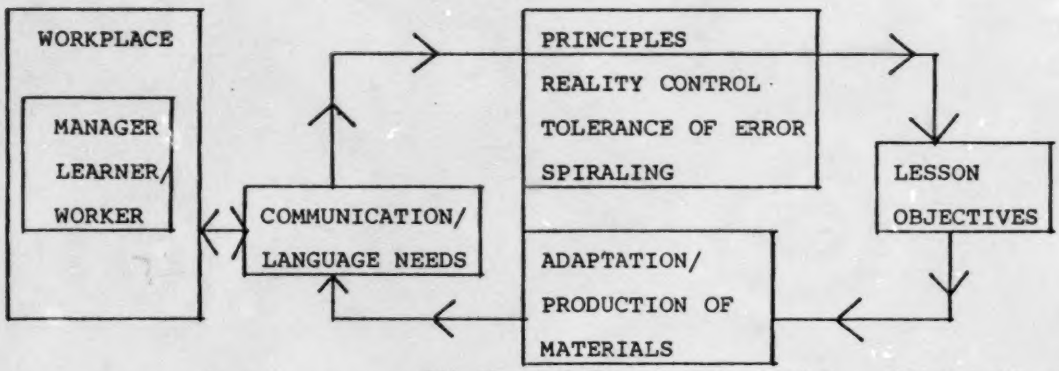
5. An organized and creative ESP instructor can build up a store of resources to adapt to differing needs of the workplace.

The important questions to ask when adapting or writing lesson plans are:

- What are the learner/workers learning in this lesson?
- Is what they are learning specific to their needs in the workplace?

As Figure 5 below indicates, there are three major principles which guide all course curricula and materials:

Figure 5



Reality Control

Before, during, and after the writing of an ESP lesson, the instructor must ask:

- What are the objectives of this lesson?
  Are they clearly defined?
- Are these objectives appropriate to the needs of the learner/worker?
- What is the language content of this lesson?
- Is this meaningful to the learner/worker?
- Is this language naturally generated in the workplace?
- What kind of attitudinal input is built into this lesson?
  Is it appropriate to the workplace?

Tolerance of Error

An ESP lesson is designed to help the learner/worker communicate well in the workplace. The objective is not to eliminate every error in the employee's English, especially if these errors do not interfere with communication. If an employee is discussing a problem with the foreman, the emphasis should be on

the machine which has broken down or the instructions which have been misunderstood, not on grammatical accuracy. If the foreman asks: "When did this happen?" and the learner/worker replies: "It is yesterday," and the foreman understands that it was yesterday, the communication was successful. Despite linguistic error, the learner/worker understood the question and gave the necessary information in the reply.

Spiraling

The spiral approach to organizing a course emphasizes the need to return to the same topic, but at different levels, or with different language functions in mind, during subsequent lessons.

For example, in learning numbers, students can move from simple counting to a more complex task of discussing wages.

Topic: Numbers

Lesson Number:	Language Function:
1	Counting
2	Indentifying number codes
3	Measuring
4	Telling time
5	Discussing wages

With this approach, learner/workers can build on what they know and learn to use numbers in progressively more complex situations. Their confidence in using English will grow as the spiral organization of the course enhances and reinforces what they already know.

Spiraling also allows the instructor to determine that topics have been mastered, that new learner/workers coming into classes as the course progresses will not miss out on topics, and that learners with problems have an opportunity to review the topic. (Spiraling is discussed more fully in ESL in the Multilevel Class[6].)

Course Instruction

Although the context vocabulary and other language content of an ESP program may differ from those of a general ESL course, the kinds of activities and methods used by the instructor will be similar. Role plays, drills, dialogues, games, strip stories, cloze activities, and the like can all be effectively integrated into the instruction. What makes this ESP, rather than general ESL, is that the actual language will be drawn from the workplace and all texts, materials, and class activities will be taught within the context of the job to make it relevant and truly functional. That is, greetings will need to be taught, but the situations will be drawn from work (at the time clock, walking to the building) and the forms for the greetings will be appropriate to the workers involved. (Compare "Hi, ya, Bill!" to a co-worker, and "Hello, Mr. Allen!" to a boss.)

Specialized vocabulary and jargon, clearly, will need to be taught as will the structures which are identified as most important in the observations and interviews with the work force.

Program Evaluation

Not only do management, supervisors, and co-workers generate the language which is used in an ESP course, they should also contribute actively to the content of the course, and to suggest changes as the course progresses; and the ESP instructor should take care to cultivate their sense of participation.

Continuing evaluation and modification are important. Periodic evaluation should be based on the following questions:

- Do these lessons reflect the workplace?
- Are the lessons appropriate to the needs of the learner/worker?
- Are they aimed primarily at effective communication on the job?
- Are the topics reviewed so that the learner/worker is given every chance to absorb what is being taught?
- As a result of these lessons, will the learner/worker communicate better in the workplace?
- Will this ESP program change the workplace by improving communication and understanding?

The evaluation which an ESP instructor looks for is a "yes" to all of these questions.

A Case Study

The following case study outlines the steps taken to develop one successful ESP course. The three groups of participants in this case study are: 1) A private, non-profit community-based center which specializes in vocational training and ESL teaching; 2) a small firm which designs and assembles printing materials such as displays for advertisements; and 3) seven workers in this company, who had the reputation of being good workers, but who spoke limited English.

The center was contacted by the office manager of the company, who identified two workers who needed English language training. The center offered to send a representative to visit the company plant, assess the situation, and suggest a plan of action.

A meeting was set up between a representative from the center, the plant manager, and two work supervisors. The manager was aware of a communication problem on the shop floor involving the workers in the company who spoke only limited English. The two work supervisors, who had not been consulted before the center was called in, remained neutral throughout the meeting.

The representative took the initiative and suggested:

- that an instructor be allowed to spend time in the plant, looking at the work process, and assessing the kind of English needed in the factory,
- that the management informally find out how many of the workers would be interested in taking English classes, and
- that if all went well, a 12-week pilot ESP course be offered to the workers.

In addition, a price for developing and implementing the course was negotiated and agreed upon.

As a result of this meeting, a questionnaire was developed by the center and distributed at a meeting attended by the workers with limited English and by management. (See next page for a modified version.) A Spanish version of this questionnaire was also made available.

IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH!

An intensive twelve-week course is planned, so you will learn a lot of English in a short time. In these classes, you will practice vocabulary and communication skills related to your job. You will also learn some English grammar and improve your pronunciation.

Please complete the section below:

---

1. Yes, I am interested in studying to improve my English.
2. I would like to attend classes:

   Two days a week, from 3:45 to 6:00 p.m.
   Monday and Wednesday
   Tuesday and Thursday

   Four days a week, from 3:45 to 5:00 p.m.
   (Monday through Thursday)
3. I would like to attend classes, but I can't be here at the above hours.
4. My English level is:
   Beginning
   Intermediate
   Advanced
5. I am from _____.
   (country)
6. I have been in the U.S. for _____ months/years.
7. I have studied English before.
   Where? _____
   For how long? _____
8. I have never taken classes in English. _____

Seven workers signed up for the class. The company agreed to pay for the course and the workers agreed to take classes on their own time. A total of 48 hours and 12 weeks were allowed for the class. The workers decided to meet one hour a day, four days a week, rather than two hours twice a week.

The center then began preparing for the course. Since the overall work in the plant was not complex, the instructor concentrated on obtaining:

- notes on the language functions in operation on the workshop floor,
- detailed ideas of the work process,
- the names of equipment pieces and the types of materials,
- the names of jobs, and
- a "feel" for the atmopshere in the workplace.

The difference in attitudes between management and the plant supervisors became evident. Management was enthusiastic about the course, even though at first they had been vague in the results they expected. But on the shop floor, comments were made such as:

"There's no need to mix or to waste time talking," and

"They don't need to learn English. We manage quite well with sign language."

But upon further discussion, it became clear that some kind of costly error had been made recently, for which the workers' limited English had been blamed. The instructor took care to explain that this was the reason for the course being offered and that the course was aimed at the specific needs of the workplace. Furthermore, improved communication on the job would lessen the chance of further errors. The supervisors were reassured by the fact that they were having the chance to say what they thought, and their cooperation and confidence in the project increased during this period of observation.

When the observation was completed, the center was given two weeks to develop the course. Fortunately, the objectives had already been defined. Learners/workers would be able to describe the whole work process and their jobs; to contribute to the smooth running of the plant, by understanding the supply system, and keeping others informed on the availability of supplies; and to be able to discuss job-related problems with the plant superintendents and to take a more active part in overall quality control.

Course materials consisted of:

- specially developed cards showing workers using the machines in the factory. A series of structural and functional exercises were built up

around these cards.

- functional exercises concentrating on teaching employees to take iniative by asking questions, giving opinions, asking for opinions, hypothesizing, or giving instructions.
- role-play situations which gave learner/workers the opportunity to use English in role-plays adapted to factory situations. These were useful in allowing employees to express attitudes and practice their reactions to the attitudes of others.

As the course progressed, the instructor identified one main problem:

The learner/workers recognized that because the company was small, chances for the employees' advancement were very limited, and they wanted the English classes to go beyond job-specific language. The instructor admitted that the language generated by the workplace was limited, and understood that employees having spent 8 hours at their work station would be anxious to talk about topics unrelated to their work.

The instructor therefore expanded the course and began introducing topics which were not specific to the job. These were principally of a survival nature:

- trying to buy spare parts for a car,
- renting an apartment, and
- paying a parking ticket.

These topics were developed into lessons which were very helpful and met employees' personal needs and at the same time improved their English. Management was informed of this turn of events and agreed with the instructor that even language that was not job-specific could help improve the learner/workers' self-confidence and relations with other employees.

By the end of the course, the office manager reported that the plant superintendent felt that the workers wanted to speak more English; could communicate better, and understood their supervisors' instructions better.

The ESP program was considered a success by all involved: the employees, management, and the center that developed the program.

I. PERSONAL	INTERVIEWER'S RECORD OF ANSWERS
1. What's your name? (underline family name)	Berhanu Yared.
2. Male or Female?	Male.
3. How old are you?	23 years.
4. Which country do you come from?	Ethiopia.
5. How long have you been in the States?	1 Year.
6. What's your mother tongue?	Amharic.
7. Do you speak any other language?	Some Italian and Arabic.
8. Do you read and write in your mother tongue? (not at all/sufficiently/well)	Well.
9. How well do you know English? (not at all/sufficiently/well)	Sufficiently.
10. Do you read and write in English? (not at all/sufficiently/well)	Sufficiently.
II. PURPOSE	
1. What's your job?	Parking attendant.
2. What's your main duty?	Parking cars.
3. Do you have any other duties?	Handling payment for use of the car lot.
III. SETTING	
1. Which city or town, and state do you work in?	Washington, D.C.
2. Which language(s) do you speak at work?	English
3. How many hours a day or week do you need English at work?	All the time.
4. Do you require English regularly/often/occasionally?	Regularly
5. Underline any of the following words which describe your workplace:	
technologically sophisticated	
technologically unsophisticated	technologically unsophisticated
urban rural	urban
quiet noisy	very noisy
demanding undemanding	demanding
hurried unhurried	hurried
formal informal	informal
aggressive unaggressive	aggressive
secure insecure	insecure
stable unstable	unstable
6. How many people work at your workplace?	4

IV. INTERACTION	
1. From the following list, which people do you speak to in English at your workplace?	
Individuals/small groups/large groups	Individuals
Older people/people of your own age/younger people	All ages
mostly men/some men/no men mostly women/some women/no women an equal mixture of men and women	An equal mix of men and women
Americans/fellow countrymen/others	All of these
Employers/managers/formen/fellow-workers	Fellow workers, occasionally the manager
Office staff	No
Public officials	No
Customers or clients	Yes
V. INSTRUMENTALITY	
1. In your job, do you need	
to speak English? never/sometimes/often	Often
to understand spoken English? never/sometimes/often	Often
to read English? never/sometimes/often	Sometimes
to write English? never/sometimes/often	Never
2. In your job, do you need to understand and produce:	
unlabeled illustrations/charts/plans?	Yes, the parking lot plan.
signs/gestures/mimes?	Yes, directing cars.
mathematical symbols? never/sometimes/often	Yes, times on the tickets, the cash register, and license plates.
3. Do you use English at work:	
face to face/on the telephone/in radio contact/ with a walkie-talkie/in print/ through a P.A./ through television?	Face to face.

VI. TARGET LEVELS	
A scale of 1 to 5: 1 = very short/very simple 2 = short/simple 3 = average 4 = long/difficult 5 = very long/very difficult	
1. Following the above scale: Are the written materials you read in English long or short? Are your conversations in English long or short? Are the sentences you use simple or difficult?	 1 1 1
2. Do you speak about specific details, in English at work?	Yes, makes of cars, location of cars.
3. Do you speak quickly in English? always/sometimes/never	Sometimes
4. Do people talk quickly to you in English? always/sometimes/never	At first. (This refugee was frequently taken for a Black American.)
5. Can you talk about topics other than those related to your work?	Yes. housing/food/soccer/politics
6. On a scale of 1 to 5, how tolerant are people: When you make mistakes in English? When you ask them to repeat? When you hesitate?	 2 (the unpredictability of attitudes is a constant source of tension) 3 2
VII COMMUNICATIVE EVENTS	
1. List 3 activities for which you have to be able to understand spoken English in your workplace.	1. understanding when a client will return. 2. comments on the payment. 3. what make and color of car.
to speak English.	1. asking how long the car will be left. 2. asking what kind of car has been left. 3. talking to co-worker about car location.
to read English.	1. Tickets 2. Signs
to write English.	No

VIII. ATTITUDES		
1. Which of the following words describe the attitudes at your workplace?		
pleasant	unpleasant	neither
exciting	unexciting	unexciting
caring	indifferent	indifferent
friendly	unfriendly	unpredictable
polite	impolite	impolite
patient	impatient	impatient
praising	detracting	neither
		(The informant talked at leangth about attitudes. He said that because of his insecurities in using English, he was very alert to tone and volume, and while he did not always understand exactly what was said, he could pick up the attitudes very quickly.)

Chart for developing a program design

(See page 14.)

AREA	TOPIC	FUNCTIONS	FORMULA	STRUCTURES	VOCABULARY	ATTITUDE
Social Interaction		-Greeting -Addressing co-worker	-Hi Bob. -Hello, Roughy. (a nickname)	Greeting Sequence		Friendly Informal
Job Specific	Assistance	-Asking for help -Asking for additional instructions	-Can you ...? -But I don't see... -I can't ... -How ...?	Can interrogative Don't/Can't How does/can?	gages wrench bench vise micrometer	Expectant Impartial
Flexibility Increased	Faults	-Reporting a fault. -Discussing a fault.	-Adjust the ... -Check the... -Have you ...? -No, I haven't. -Not yet. -Yes I have.	Simple imperatives Present perfect Yet/already		Responsible Concerned
Procedures	Pay slips	-Pressing for details.	-Why is it less than ...?	More/less than Why interrogative	sick leave clinic absence regulation day off	Patient/ Impatient Informative

NOTES

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3. Developed by Autumn Keltner and Toni Thomas, San Diego Community College District, San Diego, California.

4. Communicative Syllabus Design. John Munby. Cambridge University Press. New York and London, 1978.

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